

Kinship Care Safety Net Services Needs Assessment

Latonya Swope

Kent School of Social Work, University of Louisville

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Introduction

The Kinship Care program is being utilized by the Cabinet for Families and Children to help decrease the number of children that must come into the state's custody for abuse and/or neglect. This program provides aid to relatives that take custody of children and prevents them from being placed in a foster home. This program provides relatives \$300 per child monthly. This program includes eligibility for safety net services. These services include child-care assistance, medical insurance, family counseling, parental aid services, and six months of case management.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to conduct a needs assessment of the safety net services offered to the families. To determine the utilization rate of the available services, and eventual need for other services that would be beneficial for the children and families.

Quantitative

The quantitative design consisted of a non-experimental one-group posttest design. A mail out survey was sent to 100 Kinship Care clients by using a systematic random sampling. A total of 22 clients returned the survey.

The measurement included demographic information along with utilization of Kinship Care services.

The results of this study found that 68.2% of the sample population used child-care assistance and 13.6% used family counseling. No other services were utilized by this sample. A

Chi-square test was ran and there was no significance found between the utilization of services and helpfulness of services. Due to the small population the researcher was unable to determine the utilization of services and perceived helpfulness of other services. More research needs to be conducted to find out what other services can be helpful to these families.

Qualitative

The qualitative design was an exploratory, descriptive approach. The researcher conducted 5 face-to face semi-structures interviews of case managers with Kinship Care cases. The results of this study showed that case managers felt Kinship Care safety net services were very useful to clients and most utilized services if they were offered. The research also showed that many case managers do not know all the services Kinship Care has to offer clients.


Discussion

The Kinship Care program seems to be helpful to both families and case managers. It appears that more research needs to be conducted on this program to improve the utilization of services and to find out what other services would be beneficial these families. This study can be used to impact policy by adding safety net services geared towards teens to the program. This study can impact practice by showing the need for more staff training on the Kinship Care program.



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Student: LaTonya Swope



The Kinship Care program allows relatives to take custody of children who must be removed from their parents due to abuse and/or neglect.

This program provides relatives \$300.00 per month to care for children.

Also, Kinship Care clients are eligible for safety net services to help ensure safe & nurturing placement.



Safety Net Services

Safety Net Services



Child Care Assistance



Family Counseling




Parental Aide Training



Case Management



Respite Care



The purpose of this study was to conduct a needs assessment of the safety net services.

The quantitative research question:

? Is there any relationship between the type of services utilized by the clients & the perceived helpfulness of the services?



Research design for quantitative study

- One-group post test design
- Mail out survey to 100 Kinship care clients

Key variables:

- Demographic data of clients
 - Services provided
 - Services utilized



Results:

Out of 100 surveys, 22 were returned to complete this study.

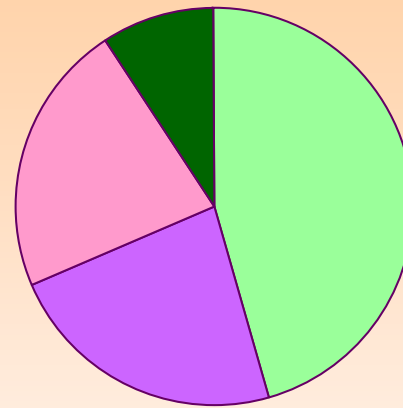
The mean age of the population was 49.

The percentage of women in the study was 86%, 13% were males, and 45% of the population was married

| Indicator | N | % |
|------------------|----|------|
| Race | | |
| White | 10 | 45.5 |
| African American | 11 | 50 |
| Other | 1 | 4.5 |
| Gender | | |
| Male | 3 | 13.6 |
| Female | 19 | 86.4 |
| Marital Status | | |
| Married | 10 | 45.5 |
| Single | 5 | 22.7 |
| Divorced | 5 | 22.7 |
| Widowed | 2 | 9.1 |

Demographic Characteristics

- Married 10%
- Single 5%
- Divorced 5%
- Widowed 2%



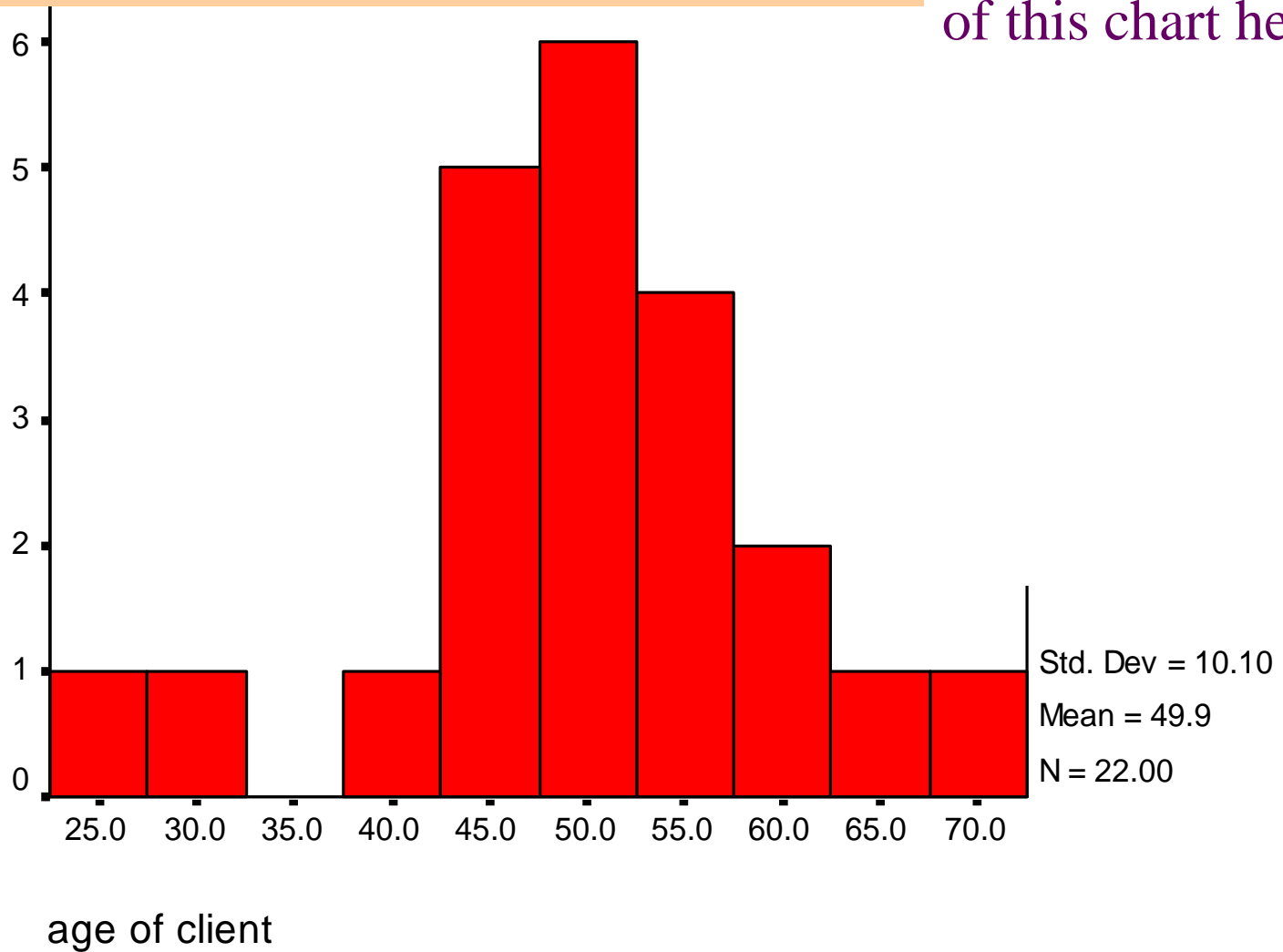
- Married
- Single
- Divorced
- Widowed

- Female 86%
- Male 13%

Insert a pie chart
here for gender

Title here

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of this chart here.





Results

What services were utilized?

- 68.2% children assistance
- 13.6% family counseling

No other services were used by this sample



Results (continued)

No significant information was found regarding utilization of safety net services and what services the sample felt was helpful.

Due to the small population sample it was not possible to determine if there was a correlation between utilization of safety net services & the perceived helpfulness of the services.

Further studies need to be conducted to determine if other safety net services would be helpful to clients.



Qualitative:

Conducted 5 face-to-face semi-structured interviews with case managers currently working with Kinship Care cases



Qualitative Research Questions:

? What services not currently offered would be helpful to Kinship Care clients?

? What reasons do clients have for utilizing or not utilizing services?



Qualitative Research Design:

The approach used for this study was exploratory descriptive, intended to develop themes regarding safety net care services.

Qualitative Themes

- Kinship care is very helpful to clients.
- Case managers find Kinship care to be very helpful with case management.
- Case managers who knew about safety net services offered then to clients.
- Some case managers knew very little about all the Kinship Care program had to offer clients.
- Clients used services that benefited them at that one point in time.
- Clients that had teenagers in the home had very difficult time utilizing services that were offered.

It appears to me that you actually have only 2 themes...

Helpfulness of services, and CM's knowledge about services



Qualitative Discussion:

The Kinship care program is best utilized when case managers were familiar with the program and all of its services that are available to the clients.

The program has been very helpful to both clients and case managers since its inception.

It would be beneficial to have safety net services in place to help with teens in Kinship Care.



Implications For Practice:

This study has shown that safety net services are needed by kinship care families, however it was unable to determine if all current services are being utilized to the fullest.

This study seemed to imply that Kinship Care families could benefit from safety net services geared towards teenagers. And the study also found that case managers may need more training and development regarding the Kinship Care program.



Strengths of Study:

- Kinship care is a vital program at the Cabinet for Families & Children.
- The safety net services are needed to assist these families.



Weakness of the Study:

Due to low population sample this researcher was unable to generalize about the whole population.